1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33)1936 SR9 Carib SR9

621 **The Settlement.** The political unit of Barama society is the settlement, and its basic principle is the common locality of its members. Settlements vary among themselves in size from seven to seventy individuals. A typical settlement is analyzed in detail in the following chapter on Sawari. Factors which determine membership in this group are kinship, friendship, marriage, and accident of birth. Termination of membership is by individual choice, sentiment of the community antagonistic to the individual in question, death, and non-social reasons such as exhaustion of the soil and of the hunting grounds. Each settlement is presided over by a headman whose authority is decidedly limited and dependent upon the force of his personality or physical strength. The headman is generally chosen by acclaim for life, or for the existence of the settlement, by the adult men of the group. Community affairs are decided informally, in conversation among the adult men when they are together during drinking sprees. Thorough discussion of the various functions of the settlement may be found in the chapter on the Settlement of Sawari.

622
554

621
103 The settlement is usually called by the name of the creek nearest its location. The names of the principal settlements on the Barama are herewith given, with their literal translations.

Aranka — orange
Barama — no meaning
Huri — a fish (*Hoplias malabaricus*)
Kariako — a small deer
Kokerit — a palm tree (*Maximiliana regia*)
Kurasani — an old man went fishing late in the afternoon and saw something in the water. He ducked into the water saying the word "kurasani" as an exclamation of surprise. It has no other meaning, but since that time the creek near where this occurred has been called Kurasani. It is claimed that he saw a supernatural ant-bear which is called tamanua.
Kwamata — bamboo
Kurewa — a leguminous plant which grows in second-growth jungle
Massawini — bright (clear) water, shining water
Parapimai — from parapi, plate; a man dropped a plate in the water and named the creek accordingly
Sawari — a nut-bearing tree (*Caryocar Pekea tuberculosa*)
Sineparu — a bush rope

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33) 1936 SR9 Carib SR9

621
103

Takatu — white water
Tasawini — clear water (puristically: tasiyainye)
Teki — green (creek)
Turingbang — thundering noises from the ground (refe g to rumble of the river or of a rapids at this point)
Wanamu — large turtle
Waramaishuru — mokru creek
Yakaishuru — kasi fish creek
Korotoko — chicken
Haiari — a fish poison (*Lonchocarpus* sp.)

572

Groups of Friends. Friendship is a strong factor in the social life of both men and women. Regardless of home, kinship, or settlement, individuals are often especially intimate with other individuals for no other reason than personal congeniality. For practical purposes this form of grouping often lies within the settlement, although I know of cases of men making rather extended tours to visit distant friends. There are always groups of men friends who go hunting together, who build canoes together, tell jokes together, and so on. The same sort of thing is true among the women, who, however, due to modified matrilocal marriage, tend to choose their friends from among their relatives to a greater extent than do the men. In the matters of lending, assistance in work, and sociability, friendship plays at least as large a functional part as does mere kinship, which, when it stands alone, implies for the most part, as among ourselves, rights and duties frequently less vital than those of friendship. The difference of course lies in the fact that friendships may be terminated when for any cause the congeniality essential to them disappears, whereas kinship ties exist in a stronger or weaker condition for life.

794

The Kanaima Cult. One of the most intriguing forms of organization is the secret kanaima cult, which will be discussed in some detail in our section on Crime and Punishment. In some form or other it has been reported from many of the Indian tribes of Guiana, without reference to linguistic divisions. From the social point of view the membership of the cult, if such actually exists, represents an important, though perhaps temporary, division of the population, a group which is, however, outside the limits of nor-

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33)1936 SR9 Carib SR9

621 162 **External Contacts of the Settlement.** The Sawari settlement, with a population of twenty-six adults and twenty-one children, includes three residential clearings and several associated agricultural fields or gardens. As can be seen from Figure 9, a nearly straight line running from northeast to southwest can be drawn through the three clearings where the people live. The clearing occupied by John Miller, the headman of the whole settlement, lies farthest to the southwest. About a half-mile northeastward, separated by intervening jungle, is the house clearing of Edwin. And perhaps three-quarters of a mile northeastward of Edwin's house lies the clearing for the houses of John Cook, Henry Daniel, John and Daniel. This arrangement of the several divisions of the community is reflected in the social positions of the members affected thereby.

103 As is the case with all Carib settlements on the Barama, Sawari takes its name from the creek where the people get their water supply. The Sawari Creek, so named from the numerous sawari-nut trees (*Caryocar Pekea tuberculosa*) which grow along its banks, flows south of Miller's clearing, passes east of Edwin's clearing, and empties into the Barama at a point almost directly north of the latter.

361 [487] Outside contact at the time of my appearance at Sawari was maintained with the settlements of Haiari and Kwamata across the river, and with Kurewa, which lies about midway between Sawari and Towakaima itself. (See Figure 1.) An old trail running southwestward to the higher settlements of the upper Barama had not been used for several years, and the Sawari Caribs were completely out of touch with those farther up the river.

484 [361] This section of the country is unmapped, and reliable estimates of linear distances are impossible without instruments because of the meandering courses which both the jungle trails and the streams pursue. Consequently, distances are usually spoken of by the Indians in terms of the length of time required for a reasonably swift man to cover them. On this basis Haiari is three hours distant, but men travelling with loads usually take at least five hours or half a day. Kwamata is about six hours. Kurewa is about twelve hours, a long day away.

177 361 The source of such European influence as exists in this region is Towakaima. On the left bank of the river, at a distance of about

2: Adams E-4,5 (1970-1971) 1973 SR9 Carib SR9
(1932-1971) Barama River

102
103
133
175
361

Figure 6. Map of Settlements,* 1932-33 (after Gillin 1936:2).

*Data are not available on the population sizes of these settlements. Individuals in settlements fluctuated between fifteen to fifty in number (Gillin 1934:333).

[162]

Upper Barama area. Rather, the settlements were dispersed along the river corridor and varied in population size from fifteen to fifty individuals (1934:333).[5] The Carib settlements were named for the creek they were near (1936:98), and house structures were located in the cultivated fields. Thus, locations fluctuated around a creek as well as among creeks. Accordingly, ten inhabited settlements in the Upper Barama River area could be estimated to represent a population of perhaps 200. This number is also supported by genealogies recorded in 1970-71.

With respect to interactions among these settlements in the Upper Barama River area, Gillin reports that the residents of Sawari were in contact with Haiari, Kwamata, and Kureva (1936:106). He also reports that this group of Caribs was "completely out of touch with those farther up the river" (1936:106).

Subsequent inquiry reveals this may not have been the case.[6] Verbal communication as well as a recognition of kinship relationships seem to have been maintained throughout the Upper Barama River area during this early period. In 1970-71, one informant remembers that as a small boy he accompanied an adult male relative on a walk from one of the settlements in the upper section of the Upper Barama River to visit other relatives in Sawari. They were lured by news of the white man (Gillin) living there and curious enough to go and see for themselves. However, when they reached Sawari, Gillin was in Georgetown. The travelers had to content themselves with a close examination of all the camp gear.

Contacts among the Carib settlements on the lower section of the

2: Adams E-4,5 (1970-1971) 1973 SR9 Carib SR9
(1932-1971) Barama River

102
103
133
175
361

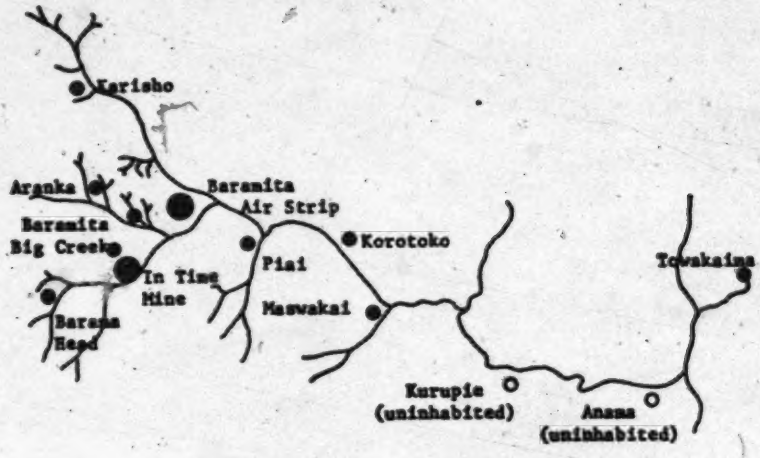

Figure 8. Map of Settlements, 1969.

102
103
133
177
361

Figure 10. Map of Settlements, 1970-71.

2: Adams E-4,5 (1970-1971) 1973 SR9 Carib SR9
(1932-1971) Barama River

NOTES

175 162 114 [173] [1]It is improbable that the exact history of the current Upper Barama River Carib population can be established. Schomburgk, during his surveying of the North West District in the 1840's, found Akawai as well as Carib settlements on the Barama River (1848:359-363). Gillin, of course, found only Carib settlements in 1932-33 and suggests that the Caribs usurped the Akawai position in the area. Gillin records a local tradition that the first Carib ancestors migrated from around the head of the Corentyne River to the Barama River and concludes that the ancestors of the Carib population had been in the area only for about 200 years (1936:113).

162 166 [173] During the 1970-71 field work, it was discovered that several male Carib ancestors with significant numbers of offspring in the current population had migrated into the Upper Barama River area from the Pomeroon River area. Some had done this to escape the widespread influenza epidemic after World War I. Also, at least some Caribs currently maintain that according to tradition, the first ancestors to populate the Upper Barama River area came either from Venezuela or the Cuyuni River area. In any case, the question of these origins does not pertain to the analysis being developed.

000 [551] [2]Carib nicknames remain in use (Gillin 1936:77-78). Individuals guard the privacy of these names to different degrees. Western names are also used. In addition to a chosen first name, the father's first name is usually taken as a last name. Thus Manuel Jacob's son is called Francis Manuel.

[103] [3]In addition to nine obvious Carib settlements in the Upper Barama River area, Gillin includes the location of "John's Settlement" and "Old World" with no indication of their nature (1936:2). Their names highly suggest mining camps of some sort.

Also, Gillin reports the abandonment of two settlements, Massevah (same as Maswakai) and Korotoko (1936:125,135), which were subsequently reinhabited. In consideration of all of these factors, the estimated figure of ten inhabited settlements appears to be appropriate.

[103] [4]The Upper Barama River Caribs explain that the Carib name for this settlement is Sewalipialu and that the abbreviation Sawari is used with non-Carib people. The shorter name, consistent with Gillin's usage, is maintained here.

[5]Gillin later revises this estimated range to seven to seventy individuals (1936:98), but the first more conservative estimate of settlement size appears to be more appropriate for the Carib settlements in the Upper Barama River area.

[36] [103] [197] [6]It must be pointed out that the Carib people recognize a distinction between the group of settlements in the upper section and the lower section of the Upper Barama River. They refer to the former as Barama Top Side and the latter as Barama Bottom Side and claim

000
[361] a difference in language spoken by these two groups of people.
[103] However, all such Carib language distinctions are being rapidly lost
[197] as the language is undergoing modification with the increased cen-
*[179] tralization of the population and reliance on English.

[7]Baramita and Baramita Air Strip are two separate settlements.

[8]This number was depleted by thirty-two. These people recently had gone to Matthew's Ridge. Also, the entire population of Anama, thirty-two persons, had gone with them. At this time, nineteen from In Time had gone to Matthew's Ridge as well.

[9]This common size may represent a decrease in the mobility of the [166] Carib population among different remote settlements as reported by Gillin.

[10]An old man and wife, too decrepit to travel, were located at Piai.

[11]Data for this necessarily diachronic perspective on the popu- [127] lation sizes are available from a variety of sources. These include Gillin's census data (1936), government census estimates and records, reports of the Malaria Eradication Programme, voting registration lists, and population data collected in the Upper Barama River area during the 1970-71 field work. The diversity of these quantitative [163] reports presents several problems. First of all, the Caribs do not record their birth dates. Nor do they place any emphasis on remembering how old any individual is. Consequently, all recorded ages are estimates made by the observer. Some age data were collected by the nominal categories of adult and child. Furthermore, with varying purposes for collecting population data, territorial units have not been consistent. In different enumerations the Upper Barama River area has been aggregated with portions of adjacent territory. Although these data limitations underscore the conditions of less than laboratory control involved in studying human behavioral adaptations, they do not preclude inquiry.

[12]Among the Carib women at Baramita Air Strip this pattern appears [184] to be particular to each woman and not related to seasons or other cyclical events.

Kloos reports a similar pattern for the interval between births for the Maroni River Caribs of Surinam. In this instance, women are tending to reproduce a child every thirty months over a period of thirty years (1971:102).

[13]Of course, this calculation does not account for twins or other [845] multiple births. Among the Carib women at Baramita Air Strip, two have given birth to twins which are discriminated against in no way.